



CITY OF NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
125 Locust Street
Northampton, MA 01060

413-587-1570
Fax 413-587-1576

Edward S. Huntley, P.E.
Director

SNOW REMOVAL PROCEDURES

Initial Snowfall

When it begins to snow, the highway crew responds with all sanders and continues this operation until snow accumulates to around three inches in depth. At that time, sanding is terminated and plowing operations normally begin. A large part of the snow expenditure is spent on equipment repair, sand and salt supplies, and gasoline.

The three factors that affect the actual snow plowing procedures are:

- depth in precipitation
- type of precipitation
- the long range forecast (12 to 36 hours)

If snow is predicted to continue to fall, the crews are instructed to make two passes per street (up and down) just to open the street. These instructions remain in effect until it stops snowing. After the snow stops, and this could be 24 to 36 hours later, the crews are instructed to do a city-wide clean up. During clean up a street such as Main Street will require seven passes to obtain proper road width.

After the Plows

Once the plows have finished the clean up of the major streets on their routes, they then start on the less-traveled side streets. First the plow makes a pass down the middle of the street. The second and third pass push the snow back to the curb to open up the catch basins for melting snow to drain. This operation will continue until the route is finished and then that vehicle is assigned to another route to assist a crew that may be behind because of a breakdown, or any other unforeseen circumstances.

Reminder

The Department of Public Works employees are professionals and many of them have over 15 years experience doing this work. Please give them a chance finish and remember that, with the Department of Public Works short staffed, some roads will not be plowed for up to 24 hours after a storm. Don't think your road is the last one to be done.